It Was All Planned This Way

By Will Seaton

DR. GEORGE HAYES, eminent specialist in nervous disorders though he was, admitted to being the most absent-minded of men. It was therefore like him to leave the three pages of his letter spread on the desk, and returning later from the telephone to fold but two and mail them inside the envelope addressed to his favorite pupil, Thomas Deering. A gust of wind from the open window presently lifted the leftover sheet, and after playing with it for a moment, hid it neatly out of sight behind the radiator.

Next day, Tom Deering, at the post office of Reedstown, turned over in his hand a letter he had reluctantly written, checked an impulse to destroy it, then with a resigned grunt dropped it into the slit. He hated the prospect of a year's drudgery in a remote, old-fashioned country hospital, and he yearned for the city with its opportunities for study and research, but there was the necessity of sending regular remittances to his invalid mother, and—well, the city was uncertain, unless a fellow had a well-established physician to back him. He scarcely noticed the envelope passed out by the clerk, as he walked off, feeling that his acceptance once mailed his bridges were burned behind him.

The air was bright with autumn sunshine, and he sauntered toward the lake, to sit on an overturned boat and moodily watch the white caps dancing on the water. When at last he opened his letter and took one glance at the joyful surprise. The first page ran as follows:

"Dear Tom—A chance for you, my lad, and don't fail me on your life. I am called to the front and cannot refuse—am leaving in three days to sail for an Italian port and then on. You are my choice to take over certain cases for me here, not more than a dozen, but with money enough to keep you going. Come on by next train. You will be a rich man if you can find a cure for Neely Grey. She baffles me. She has not walked for a year, and I can't make her, although I know she can if she wants to. —"

The second sheet had only a few words: "I went to school with Cornelia, and she always was stubborn. Drop whatever you are doing and come on." And it was signed with the bold dashing hand of George Hayes.

Tom lost little time getting back to the postoffice and after considerable persuasion succeeded in heading off the acceptance he had sent the country hospital. A train for the city left in a half hour. It was quick work to put together his traps, say the absolutely necessary farewells and catch the flier. Early the following morning he rang the bell at Dr. Hayes' house, where he found furniutre and pictures shrouded and all the symptoms of a thorough closing up. His old teacher met him with cordial welcome.

"It's good you've come, Tom," he cried. "I'm getting off two days earlier than I hoped. I've had to leave directions for you written out instead of talking them over. It's all clear, though. You can't mistake. There's a bit of money in the National, just to tide over until you begin to get in checks; and you will find good board at—"

Here the doctor's Japanese man interrupted excitedly: "The taxi she wait, sir. We are otherwise left behind and the steamer she sail along without us."

Next moment the valet had caught his master's arm and half pushed, half pulled him to the cab. Tom ran out in time to hear the last injunctions: "Make that obstinate Miss Neely walk, if you don't do another thing—"

Dr. Deering's first professional call was at the fashionable hotel apartment of Miss Cornelia. With a boyish wish to make a good impression he had bought a little present on the way, and when the trim maid admitted him to the drawing-room, he slipped off the wrappings and handed her a pair of lavender boudoir slippers.

"Please tell Miss Grey," he said, trying to look as dignified and grave as possible, "that I have a note of introduction from her old school-mate, Dr. George Hayes."

The maid gave him a puzzled glance, checked a smile, and pushing back a portiere disclosed a second room. A wheeled chair was so placed that the visitor could see only a slender figure against the pillows, without a glimpse of the lady's face. He stepped near the opening, prepared for a gentle, patient voice exclaiming in pleasure over the dainty gift, and summoning him still closer. He listened complacently to his message delivered, saw the slippers put into an outstretched hand; next instant two little lavender objects flew through the air and struck him squarely in the face. The wheeled chair was turned rapidly about, and to his amazement the invalid disclosed herself as a girl of some 20 years, with delicate, lovely face, a mass of reddish brown hair above two velvety blue eyes, and—alas, too evidently a temper!

"I—I—beg your pardon," the doctor gasped; 'There is some mistake. I came to cure you, and—"

"I don't care to be cured," the young lady announced. "And I never wear knitted slippers. Good afternoon."

There was nothing to do but apologize and take his departure as gracefully as he might, and without courage to pay a second professional visit at once, Deering wandered back to the office which Dr. Hayes had left at his disposal. The little glimpse he had caught of the lovely and furiously angry invalid had served to make a deep impression, and pacing the office he thought over and over of the mystery. Surely old Dr. Hayes had written that Cornelia Grey was his schoolmate once. And Hayes was 70 if he was a day.

Striding up and down he passed the radiator many times, cold now, as the summer lingered yet. Presently a scrap of paper back against the wall took his attention, and in idle curiosity he fished it out. The writing was his master's and he began to read. Then he took out the letter he had received, and lo, the page fitted in. Then he noticed that it was marked with the figure two, and was intended as part of the letter Hayes had sent him. It was illuminating.

"Neely is the young niece of Miss Cornelia, a very rich lady, who died some months ago, after an automobile accident. Neely was in the motor, too, and though entirely uninjured got a fixed idea that she was crippled hopelessly for life. She has no relatives, and what with loneliness after such a shock, is in danger of growing into a sour, bad-tempered woman. I have failed in all my efforts to rouse her. She detests me as well as I can make out. I wish you better luck."

Now Deering understand. For a minute he wrinkled his brow in thought, then throwing back his head he laughed at memory of the enraged Miss Neely as she beheld his offering of old lady's bedroom slippers. "I'll make that girl walk," he said aloud, "if I have to stick pins into her to do it."

Next day he called again, and taking the maid out of earshot, explained his plan. The girl, who was genuinely attached to her mistress, agreed to help, and obeying his directions, left the apartment and promised not to answer any call. "Only don't frighten her, sir," was her only stipulation, to which Deering replied that he had no such intention. Alone in the drawing room he drew the shawl from a large bundle he had brought, and lifted out a sleeping baby. Putting the child on the rug beside the portiere he hid himself and waited.

The clock ticked away an hour before anything happened. Then it all came with astonishing suddenness. The baby woke up and gave a sharp, clear cry, followed by wails. Neely called for Marie. When the maid failed to appear, there was the sound of footsteps, faltering at first, then firmer, and Deering had the satisfaction of beholding the cripple push aside the curtain, lift the baby with a little crooning sound of joy and carry it back to the other room.

. . . . . .

It was over the cradle of their own first-born that Deering found courage to tell his wife that her cure was his planning, and not an accident. Her eyes flashed angrily at first, but they softened again as they left the wee Neely Grey Deering, and stole to the bedside of the boy the invalid had adopted.

"I hate you, Tom," she said, "for getting the best of me. But I love you just the same."

While the Dollars Came In

By Elsie Endicott

ZEKE jabbed his spade into the ground and gazed across the valley to a little cottage on the opposite slope. It was almost hidden by apple trees, but not so as to wholly conceal the back yard clothesline. A slender figure could be seen fastening some clothes to the line. That was Peggy. Peggy worked for Farmer Jones, and every Sunday afternoon, between watering the horses and milking time, Zeke went over there in his best suit and sat with her under the apple trees. He had been doing it for a year.

There was a look of care on Zeke's face now. Farmer Jones had been levied on for debt, and in four weeks more the little fruit farm would be sold by order of the sheriff. Then Peggy would have to go elsewhere.

What Zeke would like could not be, now. He had nothing in the world but his Sunday suit and a debt of $40 owed the undertaker. He had provided for his mother until she died a few weeks before, and her illness and funeral expenses had taken more than all he had. He could not marry in debt.

So his spade went into the ground viciously.

Near the Hooper barn was a sagging huge gate that had to be opened every time the cattle were let out or in, and, indeed, every time any one went to the barn. At least three or four minutes were lost every time any one passed through. Within a week after he hired out to Hooper, Zeke began to cast discontented looks at the gate, until one moonlight night he determined upon action. He had nothing to work with except a hammer and some bits of plank and a few rusty nails. But out of the planks he fashioned a sort of trough, which he secured firmly to the hinge end of the gate, allowing it to project from the top. Into this trough he placed as large stones as he could lift, adding to them until the sagging end of the gate was raised clear of the ground. Finally he had it so nicely balanced that the mere touch of his finger would swing it open or shut. Then he shifted the hinges so that the gate would swing to of itself after any one had passed through.

The next morning Job Hooper looked the gate over sharply, but as there seemed to be nothing with which he could find fault, he remained silent. A few days later the drummer of an agricultural concern came around with some improved tools which he wished to show. Job Hooper, of course, did not want to buy any, and he said so bluntly. But the drummer still lingered.

"Suppose you let me leave one of the rakes for a month?" he urged. "You needn't buy it, or even touch it, if you don't want to. I will call for the rake at the end of thirty days and my profit will chance on your looking it over and maybe using it, or of some of the neighbors coming in and looking at it. That will mean a future sale. It's just an advertising dodge, you see."

"Oh, ye can leave the thing if ye want to," said Job, ungraciously.

"That's all right," said the drummer, "but hello! what sort of contrivance is that?"

They were standing near the gate and apparently forgetting his own business, the drummer went forward and examined Zeke's work curiously. "Good idea!" he said, turning to Job, approvingly. "A grand good idea! How did you happen to think of it?"

"It's some of my hired man's dilly-dallyin'," replied Job, gruffly. "He's forever up to something of that sort. Wastes half his time."

Zeke was digging post holes a few yards away, but, though he flushed, he did not look up.

"No wasted time about that," declared the drummer emphatically. "It's a valuable idea. There's money in it."

"Money?" questioned Job, eagerly. Then he saw one of the horses squeezing his body through the open doorway of the corncrib and he rushed off. He would have sent Zeke, but he preferred the hired man to continue at the posthole digging.

"So it's your idea, is it?" said the drummer, as he crossed to Zeke's side. "Going to have it patented, of course?"

Zeke laughed. "Patented—that foolish thing! Why, it's nothing but a lot of stones and two hinges placed so the gate will shut itself."

The drummer regarded him thoughtfully. "Look here," he said suddenly, "how would you like to make a trade? I could appropriate the idea for myself, if I did business that way, but I don't. Still, I like to make money whenever I see a chance. My house does a good deal in patented articles, and I can generally guess pretty close whether there's money in an idea or not. Now, if you say so, I will put this through at my own expense and keep half the profit. What do you say?"

Zeke's indifference began to vanish. "If you really think it's worth anything," he said, doubtfully. "I don't want you to lose money. But I thought patents were made of pulleys an' springs an' such things, an' that 'twas geniuses who got 'em up after years of study."

The drummer smiled. "It is that way sometimes," he said.

He opened a notebook and wrote for some seconds, then tore out the leaf and handed it to Zeke. "It's a sort of agreement for you to put your name to," he said. "Read it first, though. Never sign anything until you know what it is."

Zeke took the paper and read it, then he affixed his name with the pen which the drummer held ready.

Three weeks went by and nothing more was heard from the drummer. Job Hooper was openly scoffing now. But it did not disturb Zeke in the least. In spite of what the drummer had said he could not bring himself to believe the simple contrivance was of any value.

Then at the end of three weeks came this letter:

"Mr. Zeke Wright, Hooper's Farm—Dear Sir: The patent papers are going through all right, but in the meantime the house I work for has made an offer for a one-half interest. As you left the matter wholly in my hands, I refused to sell more than half, but this sale, I think, would be for our interest. The house has facilities for placing a patented article upon the market which you and I lack, and I fully believe that in their hands a half interest will be more remunerative to us than the whole, as we could handle it. The sale is $1,500 for each of us; and I think we can reasonably hope for nearly as much more each year for a long time to come. Of course, if you do not wish to make this sale, it need not stand. You will only have to return the inclosed check with your refusal. But my advice is to accept."

Not wish to make the sale! Zeke laughed aloud at the thought. Why, the money? Then he gasped at the sudden, new tremendous idea. The Jones sale would come off in a few days and he believed the place would be knocked down for less than $1,500. Or, if not, he could easily borrow the little difference there might be, or let it go on mortgage until another check came on the gate patent. Peggy need not leave the pretty fruit farm after all—only move from the kitchen into the parlor.

A Little Adventure of Two

By Annette Angert

"WELL, good-by folks," bellowed Hezekiah Middleton, as the train moved slowly on its way.

"Good-by," echoed his wife, Miranda.

"Good luck," answered the "folks," and then began to wave their hands, a thing which they continued to do until the train was lost to sight.

"Well, we are off at last," said Mrs. Middleton, settling back on the seat. "It just did seem as if we never would be, though."

"Yes, we are off at last," answered her husband.

"Mirandy," he suddenly exclaimed, "are you sure you told that hired man to feed the cat?"

"Absolutely," was the answer, "but Hezekiah, you are setting on our lunch. Get up this minute before you squash those doughnuts."

Hezekiah slowly arose, only to sit on the flowers which had been bestowed so lavishly on them by the neighbors.

"You do beat anything I ever saw, Hezekiah. Can't you see what you are setting on, now?"

"Yes, my dear," gently soothed the husband, "but I am so tired I can hardly see."

Conversation ceased and nothing could be heard but the snoring of Hezekiah.

Mr. and Mrs. Middleton had been planning on a four-day visit to the city home of their married daughter for quite a while. They had at last succeeded in getting ready, and were now actually on their way.

"Melborne, Melborne," cried the conductor, putting his head in at the door.

"Hezekiah," called Miranda, "wake up, wake up. We're here."

Her husband gave a loud snore and slowly opened his eyes before he fully comprehended where he was.

Fearing that the train might start before they succeeded in getting off, they fairly ran the whole length of the car. But at last they stood upon the platform, jostled by the people, and not knowing where to go.

"Louise said that she would be here to meet us," almost sobbed Mrs. Middleton, "but I don't see her, do you?"

"No, I don't," Hezekiah was obliged to say "but I wouldn't worry. She will be here soon, and if she isn't, I heard someone hollering 'hack' a few minutes ago, and probably they can take us where we wish to go."

His wife was comforted and suddenly cried out, "Look at that grand automobile, and look who is in it!"

"Well, I swan! Louise!" ejaculated Hezekiah.

Just then Louise espied them. After the greetings were over, they were put into that "grand automobile" and were soon in front of a tall, spacious-looking, brick building, which proved to be the home of Louise.

They were ushered into a large hall which was absolutely still save for the creaking of Hezekiah's new boots. Miranda kept smoothing down the front of her dress, while her husband twirled his hat.

"The maid will show you to your rooms," said Louise, "and you can dress for dinner."

"Dress," echoed Hezekiah, "I—" but a nudge from Miranda interrupted his saying that he had his only best suit on.

"Thank you," was Miranda's reply.

They were led up the wide staircase and soon found themselves alone in their large bedroom.

"Well, I never," ventured Hezekiah.

"Nor I, either," returned his wife. "I sure will have some new ideas to show that Miss Brown when I get home, and to think that I thought her house was nice."

"I wonder what Hiram Smith is doin' at home, now," began the husband, and they continued to talk on this subject until the bell rang to go down to dinner.

When they had been welcomed by John, the husband of Louise, they were led into the brightly lighted dining room, and the dinner began, and such a dinner it seemed to Mr. and Mrs. Middleton! It was the topic of conversation at home for the next four months.

When the old couple were talking of it later in their rooms, Hezekiah declared that if all the knives and forks of all the folks at home were put together, they couldn't equal the number that he, himself, had used that night.

"I guess I won't need those checked aprons I brung along," Miranda said. "I guess that Louise doesn't do much work by the number of servants around here."

"I guess not, either," answered Hezekiah. "At supper—I mean, dinner—I felt so much like a baby, having someone stand at my elbow all the time, I thought I hadn't ought to eat those pickles for fear I would be sick."

"Well, I'm so tired, so good-night, Hezekiah," said Miranda.

"Good-night, Miranda," came her husband's answer.

And so their city life began. Rides, theaters, dinners and art galleries were only a few of the many places where they went during the four days.

But at last the day came when they said good-by, and once more boarded the train, only to go in another direction this time—towards home.

"We have had a lovely visit," shouted the couple from the window in the train.

The conductor shouted, "All aboard," and they started on their journey. As they neared home, they both craned their necks from the window to see if they could see a few of the neighbors and sure enough, there was a crowd of them all waiting to welcome them home.

Before the train stopped Hezekiah was shouting to everyone on the platform, and for once Miranda let him do as he pleased.

Hezekiah later said that he couldn't even think when he got off of that train because of the shouts and cheers which arose. That night, as they were settled in their own home and the last guest had departed (for everyone had come to see them that day), Hezekiah, half closing his eyes, turned to his wife, and said, "I like Louise's house, but don't it seem good to get home again?"

"It certainly does," responded Miranda, and then everything was still except the tick, tick of the clock, for they were both fast asleep.

They Both Wanted to Speak

By Walt Gregg

CELIA had read hundreds of stories whose plot centered around the visit of an old school friend more attractive than the wife to whom the husband gives his love. She always had enjoyed them, conscious that she had been the prettiest girl in her class and therefore could with perfect safety allow Martin to be in close association with any of them who might care to visit her.

None of them cared for a long time. Their ways had diverged, their interests had scattered. She hardly remembered the names of those who had married; did not know the whereabouts of those who had stayed single and now were working in various cities. She herself was a busy wife and mother. She had three children, the oldest nine. That meant ten happy years, except, of course, for the usual mishaps that dot every married life.

School days seemed far off. In ten years she had lost her girlish slimness, she knew. But then Martin was almost fat and his hair, always thin, had disappeared entirely from a spot on the crown the size of a dollar. So he couldn't cast reflections on her because of a double chin and disinclination to curl her hair except for special occasions. She doubted amusedly if Martin knew when her hair was curled and when straight.

So when she met Ethel Hayne in a department store and heard that she had been illustrating in the city for five years and was a bit lonesome and homesick, without a thought of consequences she suggested that Ethel come to live with them. They had a spare room and it would be pleasant. Frankly Celia confessed that the money could be used. Ethel agreed to come. She was a tall, vivacious girl, not pretty. She had never been that, though her mouth and eyes were good. Celia always had liked her for her invariable good spirits. Now she was genuinely glad to note that Ethel retained much of the old young girl charm.

Ethel came. Martin, too, agreed that it was pleasant to have some one whom they knew in the extra room. He didn't like the usual run of roomers. For a week they enthusiastically discussed old times, courting days, old friendships. Celia declared that she was going to hunt the location of all the class and invite them to a reunion. Ethel said it would be nice. But some lived in California, some in New Jersey. It would be impossible to get them together.

"Of course," said Martin, "Celia's impractical."

"But dear and sweet," said Ethel gratefully.

Celia laughingly agreed with Martin. Then they began to talk of Ethel's work. She said that she had prospered to a fair degree. But of course in any artistic line no progress satisfies. She talked animatedy of her hopes, prospects, triumphs and defeats. She had the real worker's egotism. But it was entertaining. Martin, who was an advertising man, was interested. He spoke of her doing some commercial work for his firm. There was no undue pride or temperament about Ethel. She said she would be very glad. It was arranged that she lunch with Martin the next day and be introduced to the manager, Celia could not join them, because the children had to have their lunch.

In the morning, the three planned a theater jaunt to make up for Celia's missing the lunch. The theater jaunt was gay. Martin laughed. Celia had not seen him laugh so for years. It took her back to the old courting days when he chaffed ushers and waiters. She had not realized how sober Martin had grown in these years.

There were other theater parties; sometimes supper afterward. Celia enjoyed them. But after a while she began to reflect that they were spending more money than they could afford. Yet she did not see how to stop. Ethel did not ask them to go. She merely expressed a willingness to be taken. And somehow Celia hated to let her know that they could not afford it. With the three children they had to be careful, or income and output would not balance. Celia fretted under debt, even a small one.

So for awhile she stayed at home, even from movies, but urged the two to go without her. She hoped that they would not. But they did—occasionally at first; then frequently.

Finally Martin began to treat Celia differently. She felt it, rather than noticed it. One night from behind his paper she saw him studying Ethel's vivacious face. She had not known that Martin could study a face so intently. It hurt. She never dreamed that anything could hurt her so hard. Rising hastily, she went to her bedroom, and then, after five minutes, she dared not come out. She went to bed, calling out that she had a headache.

Nothing was the same after that. Counting grimly one day, she learned that the money that Ethel paid for her room was slightly less than they had paid out on jaunts. Well, it was petty to count it, but who could help pettiness when three children needed every spare cent for clothes. Her round face took on a grim look.

So she made no fuss, nor gave any sign that life was different to her. She was surprised at her own callousness, for she was able to talk to Ethel without rancor, and even to discuss the topics of the day with unconcern. She wondered dully if the girl would live with them forever. Sometimes she annoyed herself by wondering how far she and Martin had gone. But she fiercely would not admit that thought unless it forced itself on her.

She felt, however, that she could not endure this three-cornered situation any longer. She had overestimated her power of endurance. When Martin came home that night she must talk to him.

It was a relief that Ethel telephoned she was dining down town. Celia was frightened for a moment. Was Martin—" But he came home. And at the dinner table she began bravely: "Martin, I've been intending, trying to speak to you about Ethel."

"Well, I'm glad you have," said Martin. "I've been trying to speak to you! Now, I know she's your friend and you're fond of her, and it's pleasant to have her around. But, say, she's borrowed every cent I've had to spare for a month! I'm broke! Of course, it's hard to refuse a woman, but, darn it! she squanders money! She has no sense of honesty! I think she's a grafter! Now, fly off the handle, Celia. I can't help it! I'm tired of eating doughnuts and coffee for lunch, so she can order strawberries out of season. Yes, she does that! Saw her in a restaurant one day. She was by herself, and, believe me, I sneaked out before she saw me."

"Oh!" Then Celia laughed, long and hard. But she never told him what developed her unexpected sense of humor.

Just Smiles

Too Many Big Names.

He was the new elevator boy and the brokers and bankers in the big skyscraper were not familiar with his name.

"Charles," called the first broker that entered the car, "the seventh."

The new boy stopped at the seventh floor.

"Louis," said another, "the fifth."

The car slowed up at the fifth floor.

"Albert," persisted another, the second."

The boy looked suspicious. Suddenly a tall clerk touched him on the arm and chirped:

"Joseph, the first!"

This was too much. The new lad looked around in disgust. "Say, are you fellows trying to guy me?" he growled. "Or do you think this car is a bunch of Roman history? Huh! Joseph, the first, eh? First thing you will be calling 'Richard, the third,' and I'll go daft and holler, 'Me kingdom for a horse.' Cut it out!"

His Deep Concern.

The kind old lady noticed a small lad entering a cobbler's with a small package.

"What have you there, sonny?" she asked kindly.

"Ma's slipper," replied the lad; "you see, there is a tack out of place in it and I want to have it fixed before ma notices it."

"Ah, what a considerate little boy! suppose you are afraid the tack might hurt your mother's foot?"

"Well, it isn't exactly that. You see, the tack is sticking out on the sole and this is the slipper ma spanks me with."

An Artful Dodger.

"Yes," said the candidate, "I must admit that when those hoodlums down at Podunk tried to argue with me I dodged the issue."

"Why did you do that?" queried the campaign manager.

"Because," explained the candidate, "they tried to argue with eggs."